

Orange County  
Emergency Medical Services  
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# Health Care Agency's Emergency Medical Services

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## Editor:

Barb Andrade, RN

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"All our dreams can come true if  
we have the courage to pursue  
them."  
- Walt Disney

## OCEMS Program Director Retires

By Barb Andrade, RN

May 31, 2001 CeCe Waite, RN, OCEMS Program Director, retired. We here at OCEMS wish CeCe and Nick Waite the best of luck as they travel to and from Idaho and Arizona. The Waite's plans are to sell their house in Orange, and begin moving essential things to Challis, Idaho. They will be building a barn in Idaho this summer, then will return to Quartzite, Arizona to "Hunker" down for the winter.



The following was a short letter written by CeCe to the EMS community;

"It is with both sadness and happiness that I end my career with OCEMS. I have been involved with OCEMS since 1975. Thirty years were spent at Hoag Memorial Hospital as an emergency room nurse—twenty-one of these as an MICN, next as the neuro-resource nurse and finally as the Prehospital Care Coordinator. It was very exciting to have such an active role in the evolution

of EMS. It was a more forgiving time – we all made mistakes and learned together. The system has grown immensely over the years.

These last five years, spent with the County, have been a refreshing and challenging job change. In my role as EMS Program Director, I have expanded my working relationships to all areas of Orange County which have afforded me the opportunity to meet and work with some very talented and dedicated individuals.

I take with me all of the things that you have taught me. It has been both professionally and personally fulfilling for me to help contribute to the EMS System in Orange County. I leave in your very capable hands the difficult decisions to make for the future!"

## CONSTRUCTION NOTE



OCEMS is in the process of remodeling the front office area. We are still open for business. Just follow the signs to our new entrance. This remodel will help us serve you more efficiently. For questions please call (714) 834-3500.

Code Triage By Paul Russell, RN

Exercise Mania

There are more opportunities to test the medical disaster response system than ever before. All three Orange County Multi-Agency Disaster (OCMAD) Nets are in the process of planning an exercise. Plans are also under way for three fall exercises; San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, John Wayne Airport and the November 15<sup>th</sup> Statewide EMS Authority Exercise.

There is no lack of a chance to test the system you participate within. However, there is a lack of volunteers for some of these exercises. Orange County is somewhat unique in that it stages many exercises that involve the use of live role-players to simulate casualties. This adds to exercise realism and depth of play. But, it also adds to the challenge of staging a drill. All participating agencies benefit from the mass casualty exercises. Therefore, all participants need to make efforts to solicit volunteers to play the role of ill and injured. Be involved and contribute to the planning process.

Schedule of Upcoming Mass Casualty Exercises...

By Paul Russell, RN

South/Yellow Net	June 27, '01	OCFA	Explosion event
Metro/Blue/North Green Nets Exercise	Nov. '01	City of La Habra	Unknown
San Onofre Nuclear Generation Station (SONGS)	Aug. 8, '01 & Sept. 12, '01	Operational Area (Orange County)	Power plant incident
John Wayne Airport Exercise	October '01	JW Airport	Aircraft accident
Statewide Hospital Exercise	Nov. 15 '01	All Hospitals	Unknown

There are a variety of SONGS training classes that are now being offered by the Sheriff's Emergency Management staff at the Emergency Operations Center. Contact Linda Bomberg at (714) 628-7018 to receive a class schedule.

MIFEPREX®

By Ken Miller, MD

There has been considerable debate over the ethics and practice of early first trimester pregnancy termination by pharmacologic means. In September 2000, the FDA approved mifepristone (Mifeprex®), formerly called RU-486, for elective termination of early first trimester pregnancy by qualified physicians. It is approved for use in terminating pregnancy of 49 days (7 weeks) or less and is used in combination with misoprostol (Cytotec®).

Mifepristone has both anti-progesterone and prostaglandin effects on the uterus. These effects combine to stimulate uterine contractility and shedding of endometrium. Misoprostol is a prostaglandin analog and has an added effect on uterine contractility. Once pregnancy has been diagnosed by urine test and clinical examination or pelvic ultrasound has ruled out ectopic pregnancy, mifepristone is given orally during an office visit in a single dose. This is followed by another office visit 3 days later. If vaginal bleeding and abortion has not occurred misoprostol is given orally in a single dose. A third office visit about 2 weeks later is

scheduled to verify termination of pregnancy. This combination of drugs is



effective in terminating early intrauterine pregnancy in up to 97% of women. The drug regimen is expensive (about \$300 for the drugs plus office visits). Other dosage regimens are under study.

The expected effects of this regimen are the onset of vaginal bleeding and crampy pelvic pain. Bleeding can last about 9-16 days and has been described as slightly more than a heavy menstrual period. Occasionally (about 8% of patients) bleeding can last up to 30 days. Rarely patients have needed a transfusion and about 1% will require curettage to control bleeding. Other common effects are nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and headache.

EMS Implications:

Available clinical information on mifepristone/misoprostol so far does not indicate a need for change in out-of-hospital approach to calls involving women with abdominal pain, pelvic pain, vaginal bleeding in early pregnancy or vaginal bleeding from other causes. Pharmacologic elective termination of pregnancy is one more differential diagnosis in causes for vaginal bleeding in early pregnancy. Clinical symptoms and signs of hemorrhagic hypovolemic shock should be managed using oxygen and IV saline infusion to correct hypoperfusion. It is important to point out that mifepristone/misoprostol will NOT terminate an ectopic pregnancy. If ectopic pregnancy is not identified before the drug regimen is initiated, the same risks of hemorrhagic hypovolemic shock from tubal rupture exist. Suspicion of ectopic pregnancy should be managed with the same urgency regardless of other factors.

Keep Your Eyes Open

An automatic, noninvasive, glucose monitoring device GlucoWatch Biographer-Cygnus) has been approved for marketing by the FDA. The manufacturer states that it is not meant to replace a regular blood glucose meter.

THE DEVICE- The Biographer is worn on

Continued on page 3

the wrist like a watch. A disposable single use AutoSensor that snaps on the back of the device contains two glucose-oxidase-containing gel discs and two electrodes. As glucose enters the discs, hydrogen peroxide forms and electrons are released. A biosensor detects the electrons and calculates the amount of glucose. The AutoSensor can provide up to 12 hours of readings.

After a three hour warm up, the patient must calibrate the device using glucose readings from a traditional fingerstick meter and set high and low alert levels. The device sounds an alarm when a reading is too high, too low, or declining rapidly. After 12 hours of use, a new AutoSensor is required and the above process must be repeated.

**CLINICAL STUDIES** – Comparative one to five day trials in patients requiring treatment with insulin found that Biographer readings closely matched those obtained by fingerstick when blood glucose was 80 mg/dl or higher. The device was less reliable in lower ranges of blood glucose. According to the manufacturer's labeling, skipped readings and unexpected shutoffs may occur due to excessive perspiration, jarring or dislodging of the device from the skin.

**ADVERSE EFFECTS** - Edema of the skin under the device and erythema that persists after its removal have been common with short term use. No long term safety data are available.

The important thing to us is that this device only displays average glucose concentrations over a 20 minute period. It does not reflect current blood glucose concentration. So the message here is if you encounter a patient with one of these monitors make note of it, but don't change your standard approach to a symptomatic diabetic patient. We will still need to measure blood glucose using capillary or venous blood to make treatment or triage decisions. If you see it, don't rely on it for treatment or decision making.

## EMS Staff

If you have questions for someone in OCEMS, the general office number is (714) 834-3500. The fax number is (714) 834-3125. Individual telephone numbers and e-mail addresses are listed below.

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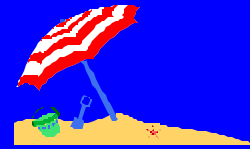
### Diversion Update



The amount of diversion time increased in the first quarter of 2001 in comparison to previous years. OCEMS will be closely following this and plans to look at possible causes of increased diversion hours and solutions. Updates will be given out at committee meetings.

## Coming Events

### June 2001



1	Hoag RPAC	0830
7	Fire Chiefs EMS PCC	09:00 1:00
8	Mission RPAC	08:30
11	QAB	12:00
27	EMCC	09:00

### July 2001



4	Office Closed	
5	Fire Chiefs EMS TPM PCC	09:00 1:00 1:00
10	FAC	09:00
11	BHPD CPAC	11:00 1:00
12	WMCSA RPAC	08:30
17	HB RPAC	08:30
26	UCIMC RPAC	08:30

"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does."

- William James

# EMS Week Celebration

May 20-26, 2001

## Huge Success

By Barb Andrade, RN

This year's EMS Week theme, "EMS: Answering the Call," emphasized the responsiveness of emergency medical services in Orange County and around the nation. It also addressed the passion and commitment of the EMS providers who serve their communities.

During a ceremony at UCIMC on May 25, the Board of Supervisors Chair, Cynthia P. Coad, and OCEMS had the opportunity to honor the lifesaving care that EMS providers offer, 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week. OCEMS is truly a collaborative effort made by many different facets in our community. The EMS System in Orange County is extraordinary. Extraordinary in the sense of the camaraderie that each agency and the hospitals share.

Although we were not able to recognize every case, everyone in the system does a wonderful job every day. Working each day with our patients, celebrating our successes and overcoming the difficult situations in which we find ourselves ... We are all winners whenever any award recognizes what it was that has brought us into EMS in the first place.

That marvelous sense of accomplishment at the end of every day...no matter how trying or how long that day has been, taken together with all the accomplishments of all our fellow colleagues here in Orange County has made Orange County a leader in the delivery of emergency medical care. Thank you to all of you!

The following individuals were recognized at the ceremony on May 25<sup>th</sup>; Paramedic Val Santo, Costa Mesa Fire Department (for exemplary service), Paramedic Brian Slater, Newport Beach Fire Department (for exemplary service), Paramedic Jim Cass, Captain Steve McHale, Captain Glen Sekins, Engineer Greg Brinkly, and Paramedic Jeff Pederson, OCFA (for exemplary service and for going above and beyond and being involved in their communities), Paramedic Jeff White and Paramedic Brian Knott, Huntington Beach Fire Department (for the life saving care of Trevor Schulte), Americare Ambulance Service, AMR, Care Ambulance, Doctor's Ambulance, Emergency Ambulance, Emergency Services, Inc., Lynch Ambulance, Medix, Priority One, and Schaefer Ambulance ( for their involvement in medical disaster preparedness), 4 year old Samuel De La Rosa (for calling 911 for his mother), the Orange County Law Enforcement Agencies( for their involvement and commitment to the BVM project), and the Trauma, ED and PICU staff at UCIMC( for their life saving care of 12 year old Trevor Schulte).

Certificates were given out from the Orange County Board of Supervisors and OCEMS. Pictures are on pages 5-6.





Left- CeCe Waite welcoming everyone.  
Right- Chair Cynthis P. Coad presenting Dr. Haynes with an EMS Week Proclamation



Left- Paramedic Val Santo, Costa Mesa Fire Dept., receiving recognition.



Right- Paramedic Brian Slater, Newport Beach Fire Dept., receiving recognition.

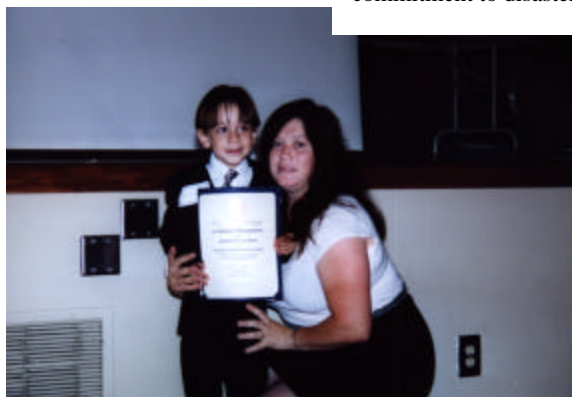
Left to right- Jack Conklin, Brea PD, John Falk, LBPD, D. Jarvis, OCSD, Rich Pena, BP PD, Denise Davis, Cypress PD, Richard Bouchard, SAPD recognized for their involvement in the BVM project.



Ambulance Providers recognized for their commitment to disaster preparedness drill.

Left to Right- Greg Pate, Schaeffer Ambulance, Rubin Ramirez and Carol Schroll Priority One, Doi Clevenger, Medix, Rosemary Dudevoir, Lynch Phil Robinson, Doctors, Scott Pipkin, Emergency, and Keith Thomas, AMR.

Samuel DeLaRosa, called 911 twice for his mother Kelley when she was having cardiac problems.





OCFA Paramedic Jeff Pederson, Engineer Greg Brinkly and Captain Glen Sekins received recognition for outstanding achievements.



OCFA Captain McHale with Dr. Haynes, receiving a certificate for outstanding achievements.

13 year old Trevor Schulte with his mom and little brother.



HB Paramedic Jeff White received recognition for his life saving skill and critical decision making to send Trevor to UCI. Scene time for Trevor was < 9 minutes !



Judy Schulte thanking all those who saved her son.



Left to right- UCIMC staff, Darlene Bradley, ED Manager, Kathleen Saunders, PICU Director, Dr. Lekewa, Trauma Program Medical Director, Trevor and Judy.

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